Timely and unique, this innovative volume critically examines the role of civil society throughout left-led Latin America. Featuring case studies from across the region, from the Bolivian Constitution to participative budgeting in Brazil to the communal councils in Venezuela, the book investigates to what extent these new initiatives are redefining relations between the state and civil society. Does the return of an active state in Latin America imply the incorporation of civil society representatives in decision making? Is the new left delivering on the promise of participatory democracy and a redefinition of citizenship, or are we witnessing a new democratic deficit? A wide-ranging analysis of a vital issue, both for Latin America and beyond.

‘Cannon and Kirby’s fine collection of essays fills a significant gap in the literature on new left governments in Latin America. The volume’s systematic comparative analysis on changing state–civil society relationships in this new and evolving political context is a must read for all who follow Latin American politics.’

EDUARDO SILVA, TULANE UNIVERSITY

‘This volume is crucial not only for understanding the political dynamics of current Latin America, it also calls attention to the potential democratizing impact that current civil society struggles might have in shaping the development agenda of the recently inaugurated post-neoliberal period.’

ENRIQUE PERUZZOTTI, UNIVERSIDAD TORCUATO DI TELLA

‘This collection brings together an impressive set of case studies in participatory democracy, popular protest and resistance politics, all framed nicely through the lens of state–civil society relations. All are good, but the section on extractivism is particularly novel.’

JEAN B. GRUGEL, THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

‘Much more than a collection of essays, this is a coherent, informative, analytical and very readable exploration of Latin America’s “left turn.”’

JENNY PEARCE, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR PARTICIPATION STUDIES

‘This is a provocative contribution to Latin American Studies with important implications for how we theorize democracy and democratization in an era of change.’

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